



Comprehensive Zoning Revision White Papers Discussion

Urban Design
Competing Policy
November 1, 2005



At the September 19th and 27th, I gave introductory presentations on Urban Design and Competing Policy, respectively. These presentations included overviews of current methods and policies used by the City, examples of urban design methods used elsewhere in the country and some general staff recommendations.

This presentation appends staff's previous recommendations to provide more particular direction to the zoning revision.

I'm going to ask a number of questions tonight. We'll take your comments and direction and incorporate them into the outline of the code which we hope to present to you next spring. The outline will provide the overall shape of the final document.



We're starting on a new level of review for the zoning revision. We've gone through 4 introductory presentations now, and we're going to start talking about more particular recommendations.

Introductory presentations provided overview of what a number of possibilities are for the revision based on what other jurisdictions throughout the country are doing.

Follow-up presentations, like those tonight, highlight only those options that are applicable to the City and elaborate on the general recommendations of staff from the first presentation. Not a re-write just a greater explanation of recommendation section of the first paper.

Question for Tonight

Are we on the right track?



There were 7 detailed questions I presented in the urban design agenda and 5 in the competing policy paper that raised possible issues for Mayor and Council. Tonight, to save time, I'd only like to ask the overarching question of whether staff is on the right track. Details can be hashed out in the outline stage of the revision. If there are any concerns that any/all of you have from either the agenda, specific questions asked in the agenda, or this presentation, I will ask again if we're on the right track at the end of this presentation, and staff will take any concerns into consideration as we go forward.



Competing Policy

Streamlining

Flexibility

Prioritization

Competing Policy

- ☛ Control character / pattern growth
- ☛ Overarching policy decisions
 - Streamlining
 - Flexibility
 - Prioritization

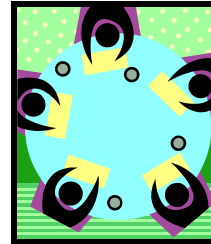


A zoning code controls the character and pattern of development and growth. During the zoning revision, many policy decisions must be made to determine what that pattern and character will be. Decision making is a cumulative process. Each factor relies on the previous decision. To facilitate the process, and to save re-write later, this paper asks these important questions now.

The overarching policy considerations in this paper include streamlining, flexibility, and prioritization. Additional policy decisions will be needed as the revision process continues – will address them as they come forward.

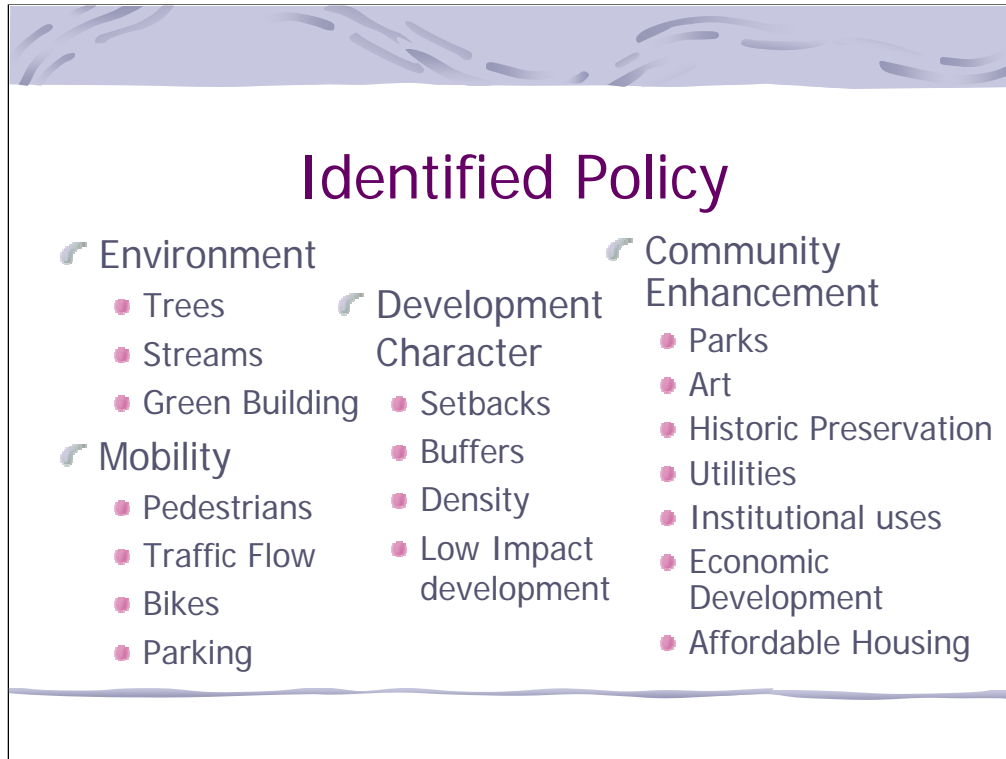
Staff Recommendations

- ☛ “Call Up” Review
- ☛ Administrative Adjustments
- ☛ Streamlining
 - Flexible Development Options
 - Development Review Committee
 - Development Guidelines



At our last meeting, staff presented a number of general recommendations – we intend to elaborate on those tonight.

- “Call Up” – Mayor and Council would be allowed to approve through “pocket approval” a special development procedure reviewed by planning commission if 1) planning commission had reviewed it and 2) the M&C would review it anyway. As decided to revise the optional method section (from our presentation on the 27th of September) not clear where this would be applicable until further discussion of the planned development options. Discuss it more at that follow-up presentation (November 28th)
- Administrative Adjustments – MD law permitting them is still fairly new, little precedent on which to base Rockville’s policy. Recommend, consider this but to wait until after the adoption of the revised ordinance.
- Streamlining – other general regulations, in accord with Mayor and Council’s recommendation at last meeting to simplify the ordinance
 - Flexible development options – recommend continuing the revision of the SDP section – authority to cluster should be moved to subdivisions.
 - Development review – continuation of development review committee is recommended for internal case review. Staff feels that it is an administrative process and does not need to be codified.
 - Development Guidelines – continue to be included in plans. Recommend including reference in the ordinance to alert applicants.



Last presentation mentioned that there are major policies that must, from time to time, be balanced. Other times they must be prioritized. In making minor changes to the code, all the considerations of a livable environment can be affected. Though staff will balance the following issues, wherever possible, as they are all important, there may be situations where one or more of them may have to take priority. This is the list identified by staff. Question for Mayor and council is are there any other policies to be added? Any to be removed?

Environment – Tree preservation / planting, Streams – stormwater management / impervious surfaces; Green building / LEED standards

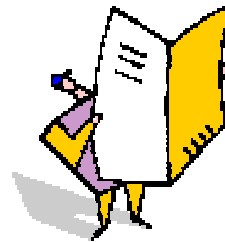
Mobility – pedestrian safety – sidewalks / intersection crossing / walkability; traffic flow/capacity; bike facilities – including right of way widths; parking; transit oriented development

Community enhancement – public parks, public art, historic preservation, utilities, institutional uses (schools, churches, etc.), economic development, Affordable housing

Development character – setbacks, buffers, density, low impact design (mansionization) – massing / shadows

What will the policy do?

- ☛ Purpose statements
- ☛ Individual standards
 - Impervious Surfaces
 - Sidewalks
 - Parking
 - Buffers / Screening
 - Environmental Performance Standards
- ☛ Add to list of incentives



The question then arises what do we do with this list?

Staff envisions the use of these policies in three situations in the revision.

1. These policies can be incorporated into the purpose statements of various sections of the code, in particular the special development procedures section. A clear purpose statement which consolidates or highlights policies from this list of priorities, and will guide the approval decisions of these developments.
2. With identified policies, staff can shape individual regulations to accomplish these goals. Currently reviewing these goals and considering new, particular regulations that would achieve these priorities. In particular, some of these policies will need additional discussion. Staff has identified the need for additional issue papers – shorter than what presented so far in most cases on these topics. The list is provided here.
3. Finally, if you remember, one recommendation from optional method discussion was provision of a standard optional method. There, provide approval – if developer meets X number of requirements, get Y number of development rights. The requirements / amenities requested to be included (the “X”) will be taken from a list of priorities. More detail on this in the optional method follow-up.

Question for Tonight

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